

In short, Mr. Speaker, WIC serves as a safety net for this country's most vulnerable citizens. However, the greatest testament to WIC comes from not from politicians or bureaucrats, but from those who actually participate in the program.

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Allow me to share some comments from a few of the dozens of letters one of the WIC directors in my district received over the past few days. Each of these women felt compelled to write and to urge careful consideration of full funding for WIC.

Erica Miner said that WIC "helped provide my son a better life than what I could before I started the program."

Laura Tadoun praised WIC for "showing me how to eat and drink properly so I could have a healthy baby." She continues, "I don't know how we could have made it without you."

Julia Bruno commented that "thanks to this program, my children are physically and nutritionally well. It is my sincere hope that WIC continues so that in the future we will have healthy, happy children and save money on medical costs."

Tina Donald wrote, "If it weren't for the WIC program I wouldn't be able to get by at all."

Finally, Nicole LeBaron pleaded, "Please take this service and the funding that they need into serious consideration before cutting it and cutting the families like myself that depend on it to help their children grow healthy."

These WIC success stories from my Florida district, Mr. Speaker, are representative of the performance of the program as a whole across the country.

However, in this era of budgetary constraints and fiscal conservatism, everything boils down to dollars. And yet on this count, WIC has indeed withstood fiscal scrutiny and, without question, actually increases the return, increases the return on our investment in the program.

Studies have shown that WIC provides a 350 percent return on the tax dollars spent on the program. For example, for every dollar that WIC spends, \$3.50 is saved in expensive neonatal and disability programs. Money spent on pregnant women in WIC produces similar Medicaid savings for newborns and their mothers.

At a time, Mr. Speaker, when we are reducing welfare rolls and stressing personal responsibility, I can think of no better way to encourage fiscal stability and certainty than by supporting and appropriating full funding for the WIC program.

Let me share with my colleagues the words of my good friend, Clara Lawhead. Clara is the Director of Nutrition of WIC Services in Pasco County, FL, in my Ninth Congressional District.

She succinctly explains the problem in my district, in terms we all can understand:

In Florida, we have faced the problem that this year's funding cannot support our cur-

rent caseload and we have already been forced to initiate a reduction in benefits to our WIC participants. This effort was necessary to maintain some level of service to our clients that have already been identified with a medical or nutritional risk. We began in February to carefully evaluate the diet prescription (food package) in milk and fruit juice for low risk clients. The next step is to reduce caseload.

Friends and colleagues, WIC is too important to the future of this Nation to leave to political games.

In short, WIC is supported by many people and continues to be a popular program. It yields tremendous returns on our investments and has been proven, time and time again, to improve the health and well being of pregnant women, infants, and children.

Mr. Speaker, if the greatest sin we commit is erring on the side of caution—on the side of children—I will be proud to make that mistake. I believe many of my colleagues feel the same and will support me in calling for the full \$76 million in supplemental funding for the WIC program.

Let me close with the simple yet eloquent words of Dawn Stamper, who lives in New Port Richey in my congressional district:

Our children are our future and need to be given the best chance and first steps needed to lead a healthy and nutritious life.

Our children are the future. This investment in WIC is one that, at the end of the day, we can all point to with pride, because we did what was right and we did it for the people who sent us here in the first place.

#### MESSAGE FROM THE SENATE

A message from the Senate by Mr. Lundregan, one of its clerks, announced that the Senate had passed without amendment a bill and a concurrent resolution of the House of the following titles:

H.R. 5. An act to amend the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, to reauthorize and make improvements to that Act, and for other purposes.

H. Con. Res. 66. Concurrent resolution authorizing the use of the Capitol grounds for the sixteenth annual National Peace Officers' Memorial Service.

The message also announced that pursuant to Public Law 101-509, the Chair, on behalf of the majority leader, announces the appointment of C. John Sobotka, of Mississippi, to the Advisory Committee on the Records of Congress.

The message also announced that pursuant to Public Law 101-509, the Chair, on behalf of the Democratic leader, announces the reappointment of John C. Waugh, of Texas, to the Advisory Committee on the Records of Congress.

#### FEC FUNDING

The SPEAKER pro tempore [Mr. GOODLATTE]. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Massachusetts [Mr. MEEHAN] is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. MEEHAN. Mr. Speaker, the last action on the rule that has resulted in this time for the Republican leadership

to kind of regroup is very important, because that rule was defeated in a bipartisan vote, and there is no fundamentally more important reason to defeat that rule than the fact that that rule eliminated the need for funding for the Federal Election Commission.

Mr. Speaker, last February, the FEC asked for a supplemental appropriation of \$1.7 million needed to address the campaign abuses from the 1996 campaign, which the Committee on Appropriations granted. Up until last night, there was every indication that the appropriation would go forward. But last night, the Committee on Rules unilaterally, and without warning, left the public hearing and behind closed doors deleted the appropriation for the bill. They did this even after the gentleman from New York [Mrs. MALONEY], the gentleman from Connecticut [Mr. SHAYS] and myself asked that the specific appropriation be included and that certain restrictions be removed.

The FEC funding was the only funding deleted, and it was no accident. This, after all, was the first money that Congress would have appropriated to allow investigations into the congressional campaign abuses to go forward.

Make no mistake. What we have here is a total abuse of process, a total violation of fundamental fairness. In fact, today we now have the majority really committing a double abuse. First, the majority is abusing the legislative process which we were counting on to make sure that the FEC is able to enforce the law as a small first step to clean up our campaign system.

Second, Mr. Speaker, as a result, they are obstructing the FEC's ability to investigate congressional violations of Federal election law. This was a hatchet job, and it is especially outrageous in light of the Congress's alleged outrage over the 1996 campaign and its providing of millions of dollars to investigate politically charged investigations, allegations that have been ongoing over the last several months.

It was interesting, because just last week, Michael Kranish from the Boston Globe reported that an organization created by former Republican Chairman Haley Barbour to boost the GOP's image wrote a fundraising plan that relied partly on newly available documents disclosed. The organization, a Republican think tank called the National Policy Forum, wound up receiving a \$2.2 million loan guarantee from a Hong Kong business and then failed to repay \$500,000. Since that time, the Republican National Committee has agreed to return the money.

When are all of these stories going to stop, and when are we going to do something about campaign finance reform? The Federal Election Commission, and I just left a hearing before the Subcommittee on Commercial and Administrative Law of the Committee on the Judiciary where officials from